Ministry of Children and Family Development

2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report

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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

I am pleased to present and report on Ministry progress and achievements for 2006/07.

The Government's Budget 2006 focused on its ongoing commitment to ensure the well-being of vulnerable children, to enhance services for children and youth with special needs, and to support caregivers and family members caring for children and youth at risk. The Ministry played a key role in leading and supporting these priorities, yet collaborative efforts amongst all levels of government, service partners and communities are critical to our success. The Ministry's 2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan put forward challenging performance measures and targets. This Report sets out the significant progress made towards achieving those targets.

The April 2006 Hughes review of British Columbia's child welfare system has been a valuable guide in our ongoing quest to ensure the well-being of vulnerable children and youth. Legislative changes have been introduced to increase accountability and enable proactive public reporting of child welfare reviews. These changes completed the Ministry's response to Hughes' recommendations for legislative amendments to the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*. Over the past year, parents, extended families, social workers and advocates have told us they also appreciated the Ministry's growing use of collaborative, less adversarial processes in child welfare such as mediation or family group conferences to resolve family disputes with the Ministry.

With Aboriginal leaders, delegated agencies, service providers and other stakeholders, the Ministry continued the important work of improving both the general and the systemic issues relating to the safety and well-being of Aboriginal children and families. Throughout the year, the Ministry worked with Aboriginal partners on a new model for providing Aboriginal child and family services, including work towards establishing interim Aboriginal child and family service authorities. This work is part of an overall Ministry transformation process that puts more emphasis on prevention and early intervention, and is intended to ensure meaningful community engagement and greater authority for communities and families.

As part of the Ministry's transformation, a province-wide Youth Advisory Council and an Aboriginal Elders' Council were established. We are pleased to be one of the first jurisdictions in Canada to have such advisory councils established within a Ministry. We are fortunate to have their guidance as we strengthen our system of support for children, youth, families and communities.

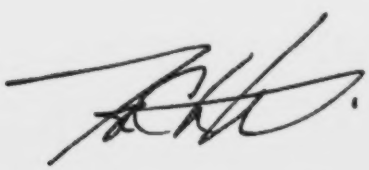
The Ministry implemented the fourth year of the five year Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for British Columbia. Mental illness constitutes the most significant group of health problems for children and youth, and affects about 15 per cent of the children and youth in the province. As a result of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan, mental health services for children and youth have expanded in all regions of the province.

In the ongoing effort to help all children and youth reach their full potential, the Ministry made new investments that have benefited children and youth with special needs and their families by increasing access to key intervention and support services. The Ministry continued to work with our partners in other ministries, including the Ministries of Health and Education, to create a more effective and integrated continuum of services. As well, the Ministry and Community Living British Columbia continued to collaborate on the delivery of services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, developmental disabilities and severe disabilities and their families.

It is through a strong network of community-based agencies that the Ministry is able to achieve many of these successes. Throughout the past year, these service providers have worked to make B.C. a Canadian leader in accountability and quality assurance with over 200 Ministry-funded agencies achieving international third-party accreditation status.

Ministry staff deserve much credit for ensuring we continually improve as a Ministry. Three Ministry employees were recognized in 2006/07 for their outstanding achievements, receiving Premier's awards in Leadership, Cross Government Integration and Innovation.

The 2006/07 Ministry of Children and Family Development Annual Service Plan Report compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the Ministry's 2006/07 – 2008/09 Annual Service Plan. I am accountable for those results as reported.



Honourable Tom Christensen
Minister of Children and Family Development

June 20, 2007

Message from the Minister of State for Child Care and Accountability Statement

I am honoured to be the Minister of State for Child Care; I am pleased to present and report on progress and achievements for 2006/07 related child care activities.

The Government of British Columbia supports a sustainable child care system in which families can choose from a range of affordable, safe, quality child care options that meet their diverse needs. Over the past year, the Province has responded to changes in federal funding levels with a caring and sustainable strategy. Our priorities are clear: subsidies for vulnerable families; support for special needs youngsters; and new child care spaces.

B.C.'s Child Care Subsidy Program and the significant enhancements made in 2005/06 were sustained to benefit approximately 51,000 children and 35,000 low and moderate income families on an annual basis. The Province's Supported Child Development Program continued to support over 5,500 children with special needs to participate in regular child care settings alongside their peers. Through the Child Care Operating Fund Program, the province funded 3,196 new child care spaces over the last year for a total of more than 82,300 government-funded, licensed child care spaces across British Columbia.

We allocated $40 million for licensed group and family facilities to spend on quality improvements and professional development. An additional $4.5 million in professional development funding has been invested, including grants to the VanCity Community Foundation to support skill enhancement and the establishment of a bursary fund in collaboration with Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia.

Other achievements of the past year include: improved assessment, diagnosis, intervention, support and education services that support children with complex developmental behavioural conditions, including autism and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, in partnership with the Ministries of Health and Education; and supporting the British Columbia Automobile Association Traffic Safety Foundation provincial Booster Seat Public Education Strategy, aimed at increasing booster seat use in B.C.

I am the Minister of State for Child Care, and under the *Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act*, I am accountable for achieving the following results in 2006/07:

- In consultation with the Ministries of Education and Health, provide leadership to establish/expand five neighbourhood service hubs that offer a range of integrated services for families, including child care, and inform the Provincial Child Care Council and other interested parties regarding the results.

- Establish three new community partnerships that focus on child care, target specific communities and model best practices, and report results to the Government Caucus Committee on Social Development.
- Host a Family Friendly Workplace Forum.
- Present a plan developed in collaboration with the Ministers of Advanced Education and Health to increase the number of skilled and qualified behavioural interventionists for children with autism in B.C. to the Government Caucus Committee on Social Development.
- Work with the Ministry of Advanced Education on the development of a recruitment and retention plan for Early Childhood Educators, which includes an Aboriginal focus, and present the plan to the Government Caucus Committee on Social Development.

These results were achieved and implementation is ongoing.

Honourable Linda Reid
Minister of State for Child Care

June 20, 2007

Table of Contents

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement 3

Message from the Minister of State for Child Care and Accountability Statement 5

Highlights of the Year 9

Purpose 11

Strategic Context 13

Report on Performance 16

Performance Plan Summary Table 16

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results 18

Report on Resources 45

Resource Summary Table 45

Ministry Contact Information 51

Annual Service Plan Report Appendices 54

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms 54

Appendix B: Ministry Service Delivery 55

Highlights of the Year

Supporting Children, Youth and Families

In 2006/07, the Ministry continued to take steps to improve services for children, youth and families in British Columbia. Access to Ministry services continued to be improved through the hiring of new skilled workers, including Aboriginal employees, across the Province; providing more culturally appropriate services; collaborating with community partners and stakeholders; and implementing quality assurance practices such as accreditation and the use of performance-based contracts to achieve better outcomes for children, youth and families.

The Ministry significantly increased the number of skilled child protection staff, child and youth mental health workers and other professionals by approximately 180 in 2006/07. The addition of these new skilled workers significantly increased access to child, youth and family services in communities throughout the Province.

Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Services

The Haida Gwaii Delegation Enabling Agreement was signed in April 2006. This Agreement increases the number of delegated Aboriginal agencies providing Aboriginal child and family services to 24 across B.C. A total of 159 of the approximately 200 First Nation bands in the province are represented by agencies that either have, or are actively planning toward, delegation agreements to manage their own child and family services.

The Ministry increased the number of its Aboriginal employees by 38.7 per cent, from 119 Aboriginal employees in January 2006 to 165 in January 2007. This included hiring three Aboriginal Directors and an Aboriginal Assistant Deputy Minister to help build Aboriginal workforce capacity and support the move to Aboriginal-led service delivery.

Of those Aboriginal children placed for adoption in 2006/07, 67.5 per cent were placed with Aboriginal families. The Ministry supported the Lalum'utul'Smun'eem Child and Family Services in its efforts to create a custom adoption program to serve Cowichan children placed for adoption. The Ministry also supported the "A Child's Roots Are Forever" program, involving the collaboration of social workers and Aboriginal communities to develop culturally specific plans of care for Aboriginal children in care that include life-long attachments to and supports within their community.

Accreditation and Service Standards

Accreditation is a key Ministry strategy to support quality improvement, province-wide standards, accountability and organizational risk management. In 2006/07, B.C. continued to show international quality assurance leadership. A total of 93 per cent of agencies required to be accredited achieved accreditation. As well, the Ministry's Youth Custody Services became the first custody program in North America to be accredited, while the Vancouver Coastal Region began the process of seeking accreditation.

The Ministry also implemented new provincial Caregiver Support Service Standards for social workers in support of quality, collaborative planning and asses nt for children in care.

Regional Highlights

The Ministry continued to implement a number of improvements to support efforts to improve its service delivery. In an effort to do more within its community, for example, Ministry staff in the Comox Valley improved and streamlined access to services for clients, through collaborative efforts with staff from the Comox Valley Family Services Association, to coach and enhance skills within the contracted agency.

The Okanagan Guardianship and Adoptions Teams are achieving significant success in supporting children in care to find healthy and loving families. Over the year, 60 children in care found families. Working collaboratively, these teams are making a difference in the lives of many children and families in their communities.

The Ministry is building relationships necessary to provide more comprehensive services to meet the broader needs of children and families across the province. The Ministry opened the Surrey North Family Service Centre, where Ministry staff are co-locating with other government staff, such as a Court Supervisor, into the Children's Foundation offices in Surrey. Renovations at the site are underway to allow inclusion of all of Surrey's Children's Foundation programs.

As part of the "A Child's Roots are Forever" program, the Ministry's North Region brought a group of youth and family members together as a "Voices of Experience" youth panel. The panel has presented at various conferences, including the World Forum in Vancouver in October 2006.

The Vancouver Coastal Region's collaborative practice program considers families as a partner in planning for children and is supported by a team of family group conference and mediation staff. The collaborative practice program along with other strength-based practices engaged in by staff and families was largely responsible for the return of 647 children in care to their families and communities. These practices significantly decreased the number of children in care in the Ministry. In 2006/07, the region was able to reallocate $370,000 from the legal services budget, through the diversion of court cases, to direct services for children, youth and their families through the collaborative practice program.

These are examples of a broad range of initiatives undertaken through regional leadership in improving services to children and families across the Province.

Purpose

The Ministry of Children and Family Development promotes and develops the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect vulnerable children and youth, and supports healthy child and family development to maximize the potential of every child in B.C.

The Ministry is responsible for regional and province-wide delivery of services and programs. In order to effectively and efficiently deliver services and programs, the Ministry is organized into five regions: North, Interior, Fraser, Vancouver Coastal and Vancouver Island (see Appendix B: Ministry Service Delivery). The Ministry's responsibilities include: family development, early childhood development, services for children and youth with special needs and their families, child care, child protection, residential and foster care, adoption for children and youth permanently in care, community child and youth mental health, programs for at-risk or sexually exploited youth and community youth justice services.

In addition, the Ministry is responsible for a number of provincial services, such as youth custody, youth forensic psychiatric services, services for deaf and hard of hearing children and youth, and the Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre. The Ministry is also responsible for supporting Community Living British Columbia to achieve its mandate and to improve upon services to adults and children with developmental disabilities.[1] The Ministry and Community Living British Columbia work together to ensure a coordinated, family-centred approach in supporting children and their families where there is a joint mandate. This ensures that children with developmental disabilities will receive supports from the organization best suited to meet their specific needs.

The Ministry's service delivery partners include: contracted service providers, other ministries, family foster homes, communities, delegated Aboriginal child welfare agencies, school districts and health authorities. In 2006/07, approximately 44 per cent of Ministry funding supported service delivery through contracted agencies with community-based service providers.

The Ministry's legislative mandate includes the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, the *Adoption Act*, the *Youth Justice Act*, the *Child Care BC Act*, and the *Child Care Subsidy Act*.

Vision[2]

The Ministry of Children and Family Development envisions a province where children are healthy and respected; families are responsible and all live in safe, caring and inclusive communities.

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[1] The Community Living BC Annual Service Plan Report is found at: http://www.communitylivingbc.ca/

[2] The Ministry's Vision, Mission and Values are from the 2007/08 – 2009/10 Service Plan. These were revised from the 2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan.

Mission

To promote and develop the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect vulnerable children and youth, and to maximize the potential of every child in B.C. by supporting healthy child and family development.

Values

The Ministry conducts business in a manner that is consistent with the Government's values as identified in the Province of British Columbia's Strategic Plan. As an organization, the Ministry of Children and Family Development values:

Service Excellence: Providing and supporting the delivery of quality, effective, evidence-based services that strive for the optimal use of resources;

Partnerships with Aboriginal People: Working with Aboriginal communities to develop, implement and deliver services for Aboriginal children, youth and families — respecting traditions, cultures and beliefs; and

Dynamic Organizational Culture: Focusing on continuous learning, respect, accountability, innovation and leadership excellence.

The following values guide the planning and delivery of Ministry services:

Protection of Vulnerable Children and Youth: Upholding children's rights to support the safety and well-being of vulnerable children and youth;

Primacy of Family: Supporting the right and primary responsibility of families to protect and support the growth and development of children and youth;

Supportive Services: Using a strengths-based approach for services and providing the least intrusive service approaches to keep children and youth safe within their families whenever possible;

Integrity: Ensuring actions align with values by promoting relationships of mutual trust, confidence and respect;

Partnerships and Participation: Involving children, youth, their families and communities in the planning and delivery of services; and

Fostering Community Capacity: Recognizing and supporting communities so they can enhance the resilience of children, youth and families.

Strategic Context

The Ministry is supportive of and committed to the healthy development of children, youth and families in B.C. The following section provides a brief overview of the opportunities, challenges and risks that affected the Ministry's performance throughout 2006/07.

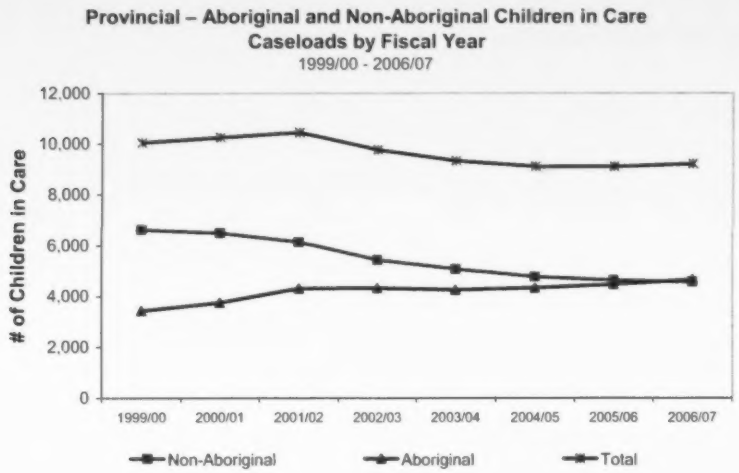
Demographic Changes

British Columbia's child population under age six continued to decline in 2006, however, it is projected to grow again in 2007. With a strong economy and lower unemployment, the number of parents entering the workforce is rising, which has increased the need for access to quality child care throughout the province.

Another demographic trend affecting the Ministry is the growing proportion of British Columbia's children and youth who have special needs. Children with special needs have significant impairments in one or more of the following areas: health; cognition; ability to communicate; sensory motor skills; and/or social/emotional or behavioural abilities. This trend, coupled with increased public awareness of special needs, contributed to increased demand for Ministry services such as specialized supports to enhance or improve children's health, development or participation in daily activities at home, in school and in their communities.

The following shifts and projections for the B.C. population affected the demand for Ministry services:

- The total population of children and youth (aged 0–18 years) in B.C. is approximately 900,000. Since 2000/01, this population has declined by 4.8 per cent and is projected to continue to decrease through to 2009/10;
- Aboriginal children accounted for approximately 9.3 per cent of the total child population in 2006/07; and
- Aboriginal children continue to be over-represented among children in the Ministry's care. Overall, the average number of children in care declined by 10.3 per cent between 2000/01 and 2006/07 while the average number of Aboriginal children in care increased. Of the B.C. child population, approximately one in 100 children are in the Ministry's care. Approximately one in 20 Aboriginal children are in the Ministry's care and approximately 50 per cent of all children in care are Aboriginal.



Note: Figures reported are fiscal year average caseloads.

Transformation

The Ministry of Children and Family Development is establishing an integrated system of services designed to meet the needs of children and youth. This continuum of services encompasses all of the Ministry's programs, including: prevention initiatives, early intervention and child and family development and child protection services. As part of a comprehensive transformation process, all programs will be thoroughly evaluated and, where needed, changed to reflect a more efficient, flexible, culturally relevant, effective approach to services for children, youth, families and communities. The Ministry continues to build on successes to date, ongoing learning and best practices.

All communities, families, children and youth — regardless of the difficulties they may face — have substantial strengths and can contribute to their own well-being. The Ministry is taking an approach that focuses on these strengths and addresses the holistic and developmental needs of children and their families.

Building Relationships with Aboriginal People and Communities

The Province is committed to building a stronger and healthier relationship between government and Aboriginal people and communities. During 2006/07, the Ministry focused on strengthening existing partnerships with Aboriginal organizations, such as working with delegated agencies to reduce logistical demands and workload issues resulting from challenges in finding qualified staff. Consistent with the spirit of the New Relationship, the process for developing regional decision-making and service delivery models that best serve Aboriginal children and families has moved firmly into the hands of the Aboriginal community.

External Reviews of the Ministry's Services

The Ministry received comments and feedback from a number of external reviews concerning child welfare practices. These reviews have provided guidance regarding strengthening child welfare practices and strategies. Significant progress was made throughout the year to implement improvements in practices and policies.

Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement-in-Principle

British Columbia works in partnership with the federal government to support early childhood development and child care services. The federal government agreed to honour only two years (2005/06 and 2006/07) of a five year Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement-in-Principle. The loss of $455 million in funding over the remaining three years for early learning and child care has had — and will have — an impact on some programs. While protecting services to our most vulnerable children is a priority, tough decisions were made about how best to allocate existing resources to ensure families have access to a range of quality, flexible and inclusive child care options. As a result the Ministry:

- Focused on low and moderate income families by maintaining the $126 million child care subsidies and the subsidy increases that make more children and families eligible;
- Maintained the 10 per cent ($5 million) budget increase for the Supported Child Development Program, to bring the total up to $54 million. Government has increased the Supported Child Development Program budget 47 per cent since 2004/05; and
- Maintained the $65.7 million provincial investment in the Child Care Operating Fund.

The federal government has committed to provide approximately $33 million for child care in 2007/08. Further details will be made available following discussions with our federal counterparts regarding how best to make use of the new federal investments for British Columbians.

Workforce Changes

The Ministry's employees are professionals dedicated to achieving the Ministry's vision and mission. The need for qualified, culturally sensitive staff continued to increase, creating challenges for ministries and government, especially in rural communities. The Ministry worked to improve the recruitment and retention of paediatric specialists, increase the number of skilled staff employed by the Ministry, as well as pursue an Aboriginal recruitment strategy intended to build workforce capacity to support the move to Aboriginal-led service delivery.

Report on Performance

Performance Plan Summary Table

Goal 1: Vulnerable children and youth are healthy and safe in their families and communities.	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
1.1 A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that supports families in keeping children safe.		
Rate of recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family.	17.5%	20.9% NOT ACHIEVED
1.2 A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that promotes permanency and stable, life-long attachments for children-in-care.		
Number of children safely placed with extended family or in community as an alternative to coming into care.	700	623 NOT ACHIEVED
Per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed.	19%	14.7% NOT ACHIEVED
1.3 An increasingly culturally appropriate service delivery system for Aboriginal children and families.		
Per cent of Aboriginal children in care who are served by delegated Aboriginal agencies.	36%	30.4% NOT ACHIEVED
1.4 Enhanced services for specific child and youth populations, such as youth in conflict with the law, children and youth at risk for or with mental disorders, and high-risk children and youth, such as those who are sexually exploited or homeless.		
Rate of youth in custody based on a proportion of all 12-17 year olds (per 10,000).	Maximum 6 per 10,000	4.3 per 10,000 EXCEEDED

Goal 2: Children and youth, including those with special needs, are supported to achieve their full potential.	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level matches their age.	87%	87% Achieved
2.1 Increased family and community capacity to support early childhood development.		
Per cent of children who enter Kindergarten "ready to learn".	Not Available	Not Available Data Available in 2007/08
2.2 Families have access to quality child care.		
Number of licensed spaces approved for Child Care Operating Funding (Total).	84,000	82,386 Substantively Achieved
Number of licensed spaces approved for Child Care Operating Funding (Average).	77,000	76,214 Substantively Achieved
Number of new licensed child care spaces funded under the Capital Funding Program.	3,000	356 Not Achieved
Number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy.	24,000	23,286 Substantively Achieved
2.3 Increased access to early intervention and support services to assist families caring for children and youth with special needs.		
Per cent of children with special needs under age six and their families who receive an early intervention therapy service within three months of service request.	39%	Data Not Available
Per cent of children with special needs under age six and their families who receive supported child development services within three months of service request.	Not Available	

Goal 3: Children, youth, and their families are served by accountable and responsive community-based service delivery systems.	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
3.1 Community-based governance structures are supported.		
Number of new regional child and family development authorities established that assume responsibility for delivery of Ministry services.	5	0 Not Achieved
3.2 Accountable and quality contracted services.		
Per cent of agencies, that are required to be accredited, that achieve accreditation.	100%	93% Substantively Achieved

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

The following section presents the Ministry's goals and objectives from the 2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan, the strategies the Ministry employed and results achieved including performance measure results. It also explains variances from planned targets. In 2006/07, the Ministry initiated a transformation process in support of changes to its strategic direction, processes and practices, towards those identified in the Ministry's 2007/08 – 2009/10 Service Plan. Progress related to these goals and objectives will be reported in the Ministry's 2007/08 – 2009/10 Annual Service Plan Report.

The Ministry uses several reporting systems to track its progress on performance. Performance measures evolve and improve over time as the Ministry's needs, resources and priorities change and as new and/or better performance information becomes available. The Ministry continues to review and improve its data systems for possible improvements to ensure data validity and reliability.

Continued improvements to performance management and reporting systems are supported by the implementation of the Ministry's Information Resource Management Plan. The Ministry, in partnership with the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance and the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, is proceeding with the development of an integrated case and contract management system.

The Ministry continues to collect, monitor and make available additional statistics and reports on trends and outcomes associated with services for children, youth and families. For further information visit our website at http://www.gov.bc.ca/mcf/.

Goal 1: Vulnerable children and youth are healthy and safe in their families and communities

The Ministry works to maintain and improve the safety and well-being of children and youth by providing a wide range of supports and services that recognize and build on the inherent strengths of families and communities to keep children healthy, safe and respected.

Objective 1.1: A comprehensive and responsible child welfare system that supports families in keeping children safe

The Ministry's child welfare services are designed to promote safety, continuity and permanency by supporting and providing a continuum of care options. These include alternative care arrangements for children and youth at risk where they are cared for by members of their extended family or close friends. The Ministry supports the continuity of family and community relationships necessary to contribute to better outcomes for children, youth and their families.

Strategies

The key strategies for this objective include:

- Supporting families to keep children at home safely;
- Expanding planning options with families to provide increased opportunities for joint decision-making and increased involvement in care plans by family and community members; and
- Increasing the use of non-court planning and decision-making processes such as family group conferencing, traditional decision-making (for Aboriginal communities) and mediation to resolve child-protection issues.

Progress towards this objective

- Completed 473 family group conferences, an increase of 29 from 2005/06. Evaluations and participant response data demonstrate that these models are successful in engaging families. In a 2006 evaluation, the Child and Youth Officer found that the use of family group conferences result in high quality plans, and have the potential to provide great benefit to children and families by increasing their problem-solving capacity and creating a climate of cooperation.
- Completed 515 mediations in 2006/07, an increase of 112 from 2005/06. About 93 per cent of all child protection mediations in the province result in some or all of the issues being settled. Participant response evaluations show extremely high satisfaction levels from parents, extended families, social workers and advocates.

- Increased the number of available child protection mediators to 48 in 2006/07 (an increase of ten mediators or 26 per cent).

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Rate of recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family.[1]	20.0%	19.7%	18.1%	17.5%	20.9% NOT ACHIEVED

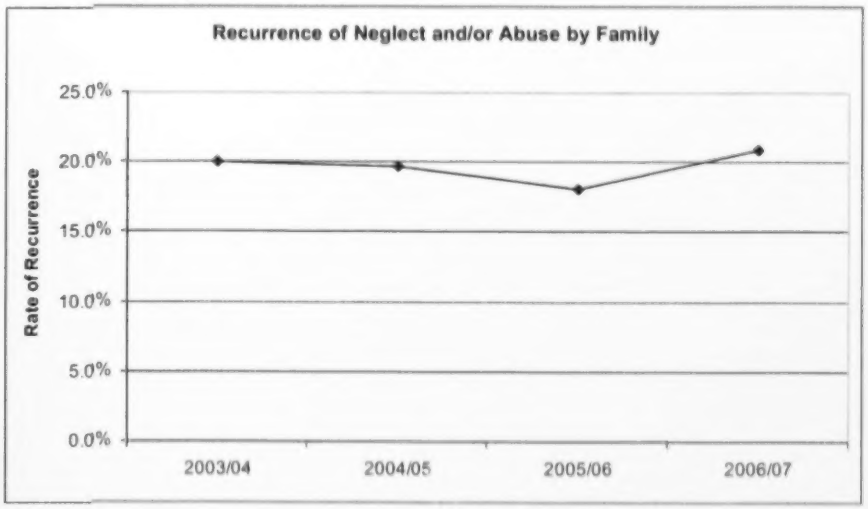
Data Source: The Management Information System and Social Worker System.

[1] The national data collection methodology is evolving. This measure will be kept consistent with the national approach.

Discussion of Results

This measure is directly linked to the outcome of ensuring child safety in the community and with their families. When it has been established that a child has been or is at risk, the Ministry works with families to reduce future harm by providing services that will best address the needs of the child and family. The measure describes the proportion of families who neglect and/or abuse their children within 12 months of a previously confirmed incidence of child neglect and/or abuse.

In 2006/07, 20.9 per cent of children had a recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family. The Ministry did not meet its planned target. Although the number of children with recurring incidents has increased from 937 to 962, the total number of children who were in need of protection dropped from 5,187 to 4,615 (11 per cent), during the same period.



Fiscal Year	Number of recurring incidents (1)	Number of children needing protection (2)	Rate of Recurrence = (1) / (2)
2003/04	874	4,378	20.0%
2004/05	802	4,068	19.7%
2005/06	937	5,187	18.1%
2006/07	962	4,615	20.9%
Change from 2005/06	25 2.6%	(572) (11%)	—

The number of children found in need of protection fluctuates over time. Research shows that the number of incidents and rates of recurrence are often affected by changes in family circumstances, such as changes in income, living arrangements and family definition.

The Ministry continued to respond to and investigate reports of child abuse and neglect in order to keep children safe. The Ministry closed 186 more child protection investigations in 2006/07 than in 2005/06.

For this measure, abuse is defined as physical, emotional neglect or sexual maltreatment and recurrence of abuse or neglect is measured over a fixed 12-month period of time. Targets set for the measure are based on factors such as monthly and annual trends, changes in practices, and the anticipated impact of strategies focused on reducing neglect and abuse of children.

Ministry Response

The Ministry continues to support and build capacity in families to keep children safe through improved risk assessments and support services. An implementation plan for an improved child protection assessment and intervention model will be prepared following consultations on the model, which are expected to be completed by the end of January 2008. Improved approaches for how best to intervene with vulnerable children and for assessing the likelihood of future harm will help child welfare workers better determine the most appropriate response to a child protection report, and provide services that better address the needs of the child and family, reducing the likelihood of recurrence.

Objective 1.2: A comprehensive and responsive child welfare system that promotes permanency and stable, life-long attachments for children in care

When it is not possible for a child to live permanently with their parents or extended family, the Ministry seeks a home for the child through adoption or other permanent out of care options. The Ministry recognizes it is important for children to develop relationships with their natural family, if possible, and maintain their connection to their culture and community.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Helping children in care to develop and maintain permanent family and other life-long relationships; and
- Increasing the use of options to enable extended family and others significant in a child's life, to care for children outside of foster care.

Progress towards this objective

- Of those Aboriginal children placed for adoption in 2006/07, 67.5 per cent or 56 children were placed with Aboriginal adoptive families.
- Amended the *Child, Family Community Service Act* to increase transparency in Ministry processes while strengthening child welfare quality assurance and review mechanisms.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of children safely placed with extended family or in community as an alternative to coming into care.	613	668	642	700	623 NOT ACHIEVED

Data Source: The Management Information System and Social Worker System.

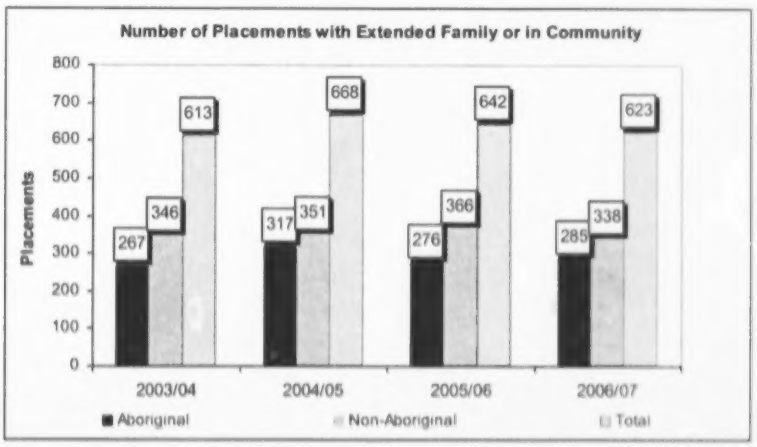
Discussion of Results

This measure reflects the importance of maintaining the continuity of family and community relationships for vulnerable children. It captures the use of a variety of options for keeping children and youth out of care and for children and youth leaving care (through placements with kin or a person with significant ties to the child).

In 2006/07, 623 children (89.3 per cent of target) were placed with their extended family or in the community as an alternative to coming into care. The Ministry did not meet its planned target.

In the last four years more than 600 children per year have been safely placed with extended family or community. In the last two years there has been a continuing decline in the number of children placed from the high of 668 in 2004/05.

Between 2005/06 and 2006/07, there were 19 fewer children placed with extended family or in the community as an alternative to coming into care. As indicated in the following graph, there were nine more Aboriginal placements, and 28 fewer non-Aboriginal placements.



Several factors are necessary to support successful placements:

- The willingness of parents/family to consent to another relative to take care of their children;
- The availability of relatives;
- The ability of extended family to take care of the child or siblings; and
- The desire of the extended family to take on the added responsibility.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada does not fund these types of child placements, which affects the capacity of Aboriginal families and communities to accept "alternatives to care" solutions. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada does provide funding for Aboriginal children brought into care.

The word "safely" has been added to more clearly define the measure. The reworded measure in 2007/08 – 2009/10 Service Plan reads: "Number of children safely placed with extended family or in community as an alternative to coming into care". The Ministry only places children in out of care alternatives where it has determined there is a safe and appropriate placement option. Safety continues to be the Ministry's primary objective.

The count for the measure does not include children served by delegated Aboriginal agencies. This measure represents the number of children placed with extended family or community in a given year. The targets for the measure are based on historical trends.

Ministry Response

A review of the Ministry's continuum of care is expected to be completed in 2008. It is anticipated that the review will identify barriers and inform the development of actions to support extended family or community placements, including the need for increased services for out of care options in the non-Aboriginal population.

The Ministry will continue discussions with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada about changes to the funding formula affecting the out of care options.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed.	20.5%	19.4%	17.6%	19%	14.7% Not Achieved

Data Source: The Adoption Management System.

Discussion of Results

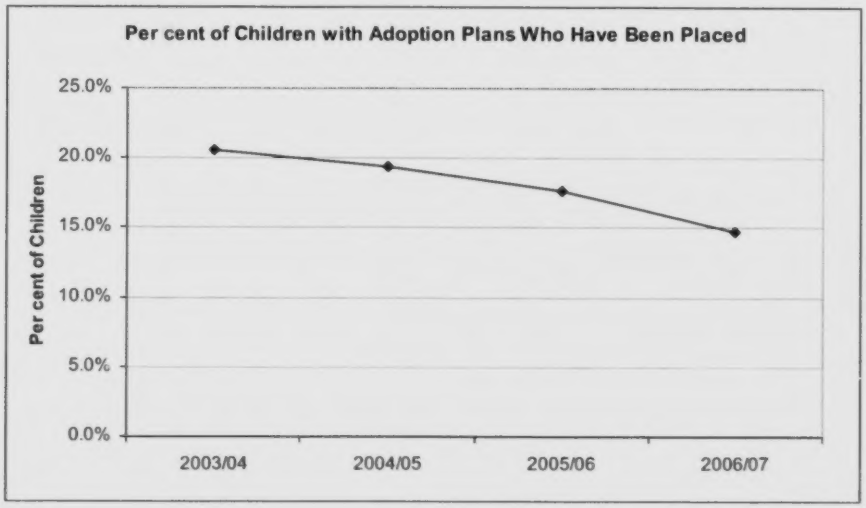
The Ministry's priority is to seek a permanent family home for all children who would otherwise remain in Ministry care until they reach adulthood. The number of adoptions of children who have been in the care of the Ministry illustrates how many of these children now belong to a permanent family.

In 2006/07, the Ministry placed 14.7 per cent of the 1,770 children with adoption plans into adoptive families. The Ministry did not meet its planned target.

After the significant increase in adoption placements in 2002/03 (43 per cent increase over 2001/02), there has been a downward trend in the per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed over the last four years.

Children in Care	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	Change from 2005/06
Children with plan of adoption.	1,622	1,581	1,602	1,770	10.5%
Total number of children placed for adoption.	333	307	282	260	(7.8%)

When a decision is made that the long term plan for a child in care is adoption, an adoption plan is developed and the child is registered for adoption. An adoption order may be granted once all legal resource issues are addressed and following a minimum of six months of successful placement with the prospective adoptive parents. In 2006/07, 1,301 of the 1,770 children with care plans were registered for adoption.



Two factors affect a successful adoption: the appropriate matching of a child in care with an adoptive family, and the availability of support services after the placement has been made. Workers who provide services to families and children waiting for adoption placement also provide support services to meet the ongoing needs of children who have been adopted and their families.

Post-adoption support services are available to families who need them, and contribute to positive life-long attachments and better outcomes for adopted children. The cumulative effect of the number of placements made from 2003/04 resulted in annual increases in the demand for post-adoption services.

Since 2003/04, the rate of placement in Aboriginal homes has increased from 35.5 per cent to 67.5 per cent in 2006/07.

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	Change from 2005/06
Total Aboriginal placements	124	134	87	83	(4.6%)
Number placed in Aboriginal homes	44	72	53	56	5.7%
Per cent of Aboriginal placements in Aboriginal homes	35.5%	53.7%	60.9%	67.5%	

This measure was changed to a percentage in the 2006/07 Service Plan. The proportion of children with an adoption plan who have been placed reflects the level of success the Ministry is having against its ongoing caseload levels.

Ministry Response

Adoptive parents need ongoing support. Post-adoption supports are being improved in several ways. In 2007/08, the Ministry increased its contracts with the Adoptive Families Association of BC by $200,000. These contracts have a five year term, starting in 2006/07 and ending in 2010/11. This will improve the agency's ability to provide pre- and post-adoptive support for families in the adoption program.

The Post-Adoption Assistance budget increased to $13.4 million in 2006/07 to provide assistance to families who adopt children with special needs who have been in the care of the Ministry.

A joint Ministry and Comptroller General audit of the Post-Adoption Assistance Program was completed in 2006/07. The Ministry is in agreement with the recommendations and will begin implementation in 2007/08 including:

- Revamping the income test — making it much less time consuming to complete and assess;
- Extending the length of Post-Adoption Assistance agreements — less time consuming than assessing and renewing agreements every two years; and
- Using spot audits instead of reconciling receipts for every agreement every two years.

Objective 1.3: An increasingly culturally appropriate service delivery system for Aboriginal children and families

In order to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and families in B.C., the Ministry has a variety of initiatives underway to reduce the number of Aboriginal children in care and to recognize the importance of providing culturally sensitive and appropriate services, particularly for services provided directly by the Ministry.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Developing new delegated Aboriginal agencies and enhancing and expanding the scope of existing Aboriginal agencies;
- Implementing initiatives to recruit and support Aboriginal foster and adoptive parents;
- Increasing cultural awareness of Ministry staff;
- Hiring and retaining Aboriginal staff; and
- Allocating funding from the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for the development of specific Aboriginal child and youth mental health services.

Progress towards the objective

- During 2006/07, five delegated Aboriginal agencies increased their level of delegation (from partial to full delegation) to enable them to serve more Aboriginal children in care.
- As a result of the Roots Program, 215 Aboriginal children and youth have increased connections to their birth parents; 243 increased connections with their extended families; and 442 increased connections within their Aboriginal community and culture.
- Allocated funds from the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for the development of specific Aboriginal child and youth mental health services. This resulted in the hiring of new Aboriginal staff, including Aboriginal team leaders and several Aboriginal mental health support workers, as well as the development of regional Aboriginal Child and Youth Mental Health Plans in the Interior, Fraser and Vancouver Island Regions.

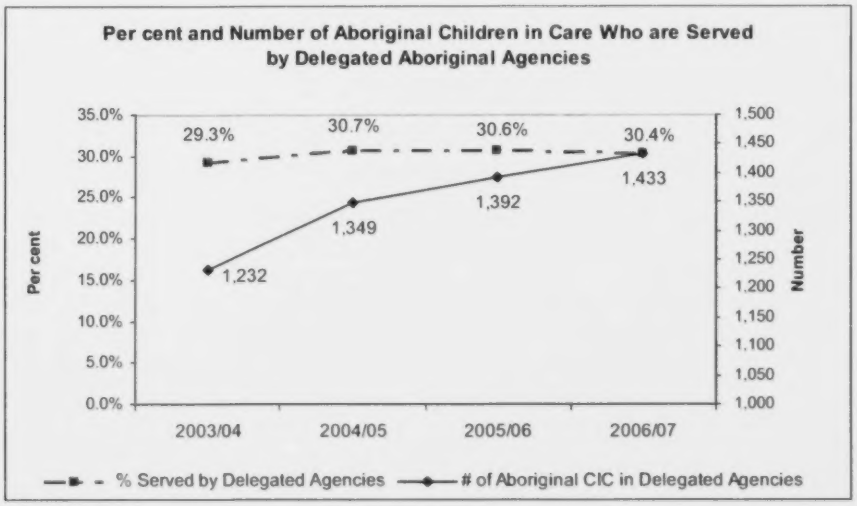
Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Per cent of Aboriginal children in care who are served by delegated Aboriginal agencies.	29.3%	30.7%	30.6%	36%	30.4% NOT ACHIEVED

Data Source: The Management Information System and Social Worker System.

Discussion of Results

In 2006/07, 30.4 per cent of Aboriginal children in care were served by delegated Aboriginal agencies. The Ministry did not meet its planned target.

From 2005/06 to 2006/07, there was a 2.9 per cent increase in the number of Aboriginal children cared for by delegated agencies. However, there was also a corresponding 2.9 per cent increase in the total number of Aboriginal children in care which resulted in only a very small change in the percentage of Aboriginal children in care served by delegated Aboriginal agencies. There has been a steady increase in the number of Aboriginal children in care who have been transferred to delegated Aboriginall agencies in the last three years.



	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Number of Aboriginal children in care.	4,211	4,394	4,542	4,721
Number of Aboriginal children in care served by delegated agencies.	1,232	1,349	1,392	1,433
Change in number served by delegated agencies.	199	117	43	41

Transferring responsibility for Aboriginal children in care to a delegated agency is a comprehensive process requiring the Ministry to devolve its services to those Aboriginal agencies having the capacity to assume responsibilities. This process has proved challenging for both parties, with further work required to develop transition plans between the agencies and the Ministry.

Ministry Response

The Ministry is continuing to work to help delegated Aboriginal agencies increase their scope of responsibility by:

- setting up and resourcing Joint Advisory Committees to discuss capacity building and the timely transfer of resources from regions to agencies; and
- providing increased access to Ministry staff who can provide technical guidance and support in the field.

Objective 1.4: Enhanced services for specific child and youth populations, such as youth in conflict with the law, children and youth at risk for or with mental disorders, and high-risk children and youth, such as those who are sexually exploited or homeless

The Ministry continues to enhance services for children and youth at risk for or with mental disorders, and high-risk children and youth. Strong partnerships with other ministries, stakeholders and the community are key to efforts to create an integrated and holistic service delivery system.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Continuing to use innovative, non-custodial approaches like community-based alternatives to custody for youth in conflict with the law;
- Expanding community-based mental health treatment and support services;
- Providing prevention, early intervention and other resources to schools to help children and youth manage anxiety and depression; and
- Providing services for youth who are homeless and/or sexually exploited.

Progress towards the objective

- Continued provision of full- and part-time community justice programs has maintained a low youth incarceration rate.
- Provided over 300 children and youth dealing with issues of sexual exploitation with individualized support service since the Voluntary Services for Sexually Exploited Youth Program began in 2005. Services provided include: one-to-one support, food, clothing, detox, residential treatment, life skills training, safe house beds and other services.
- Provided funding to the Family Services of Greater Vancouver to host a two-day provincial Youth Safe House/Emergency Shelter and Outreach Services Forum. Also, 95 service providers, youth and government staff received concrete training on practice areas, and established a provincial network of colleagues.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Rate of youth in custody based on a proportion of all 12-17 year olds (per 10,000).	5.1 per 10,000	4.8 per 10,000	4.2 per 10,000	Max. 6 per 10,000	4.3 per 10,000 EXCEEDED

Data Source: The Management and Analysis Reporting System and B.C. Stats.

Discussion of Results

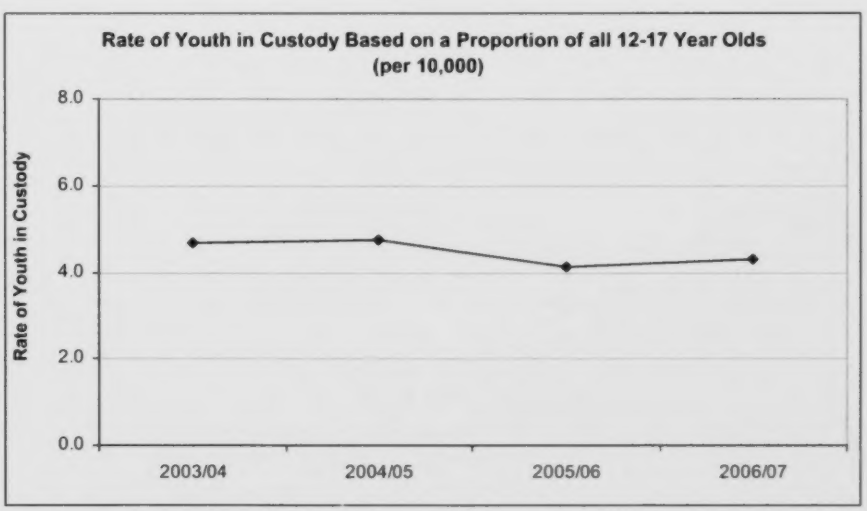
This measure gauges the degree to which the youth justice system relies on custody and provides an indication of the availability and effectiveness of community-based alternatives to custody. The measure is the annual average of the daily population of youth (aged 12 - 17 years) in custody per 10,000 of all 12 - 17 year olds in B.C.

In 2006/07, an average of 4.3 youth for every 10,000 B.C. youth aged 12 - 17 years were in custody. The Ministry achieved and exceeded its planned target.

Based on Ministry estimates of Aboriginal populations, in 2006/07 there were 19.3 Aboriginal youth in custody per 10,000 Aboriginal youth.

Achievement of this target is due, in part, to the provision of full- and part-time community programs and the establishment of province-wide Intensive Support and Supervision Programs (80 community and 20 custody one-to-one workers, with a program capacity of 800 youth).

These factors, coupled with the implementation of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* in 2003, have reinforced a pre-existing downward trend in the use of custody from 2003/04. On any given day in 2006/07, B.C. had, on average, 138 youth in custody centres.



The targets are based on historical and demographic trends in B.C.

The number of youth in the justice system is declining,[3] demonstrating progress toward the desired outcome of reducing youth involvement in the criminal justice system and providing treatment services and community-based alternatives to custody, when appropriate.

According to the latest available data, in 2004/05 B.C. had the second lowest youth custody rate in Canada. Although the overall number of youth in custody has declined, the needs profile of youth in custody has increased. Diverting low risk youth with minor offences to community justice programs has left a greater concentration of high risk youth in custody with greater needs (i.e., Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and mental health) and more serious offence histories.

Goal 2: Children and youth, including those with special needs, are supported to achieve their full potential

Work toward this Goal will contribute directly toward the achievement of the Government's Great Goals that focus on literacy, healthy living and support for children and youth at risk. Through this Goal the Ministry also explicitly recognizes that the quality of care that children receive in the early years is critical to their success in school and in life.

Performance Measure	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level matches their age.[1,2]	86%	87%[3]	87% ACHIEVED

Data Source: Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance and Ministry of Education.

[1] Socio-economically disadvantaged children are those that are in one or more of the following categories: Ministry of Children and Family Development: Children in care, Children in out of care placements, Individuals with youth agreements and Children under supervision orders; Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance: Children of Income Assistance recipients, and Children in the Home of a Relative.

[2] Data is collected on September 30 of each year.

[3] The targets were misstated in the 2006/07 Service Plan. The restated target is consistent with that indicated in the Government's Strategic Plan.

Discussion of Results

This measure indicates how well socio-economically disadvantaged children are keeping up in school.

The measure represents the percentage of school-aged disadvantaged children in a grade level that is appropriate for their age. For example, children six years of age before the end of December of the school year are generally in grade one.

[3] Source: Juristat. Statistics Canada — Catalogue no. 85-002-XIE, Vol. 27, no. 2.

The Ministry met its planned target.

This measure was introduced in the 2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan. In 2006/07, 87 per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children were at an appropriate grade-level compared to 95 per cent of all other children in B.C.

For 2006/07, there were 84.9 per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged Aboriginal children whose grade level matched their age, as compared to 89.9 per cent for Aboriginal children not identified as socio-economically disadvantaged.

Targets for the measure reflect the Government's ten year commitment to eliminate the gap between socio-economically disadvantaged children and other children, with respect to grade level and appropriate age. Each year for the next eight years the measure's target will increase by one percentage point.

By adopting this measure, B.C. is taking on a leadership role within Canada by reporting on whether disadvantaged children are attending school at the grade level that "matches" their age.

Objective 2.1: Increased family and community capacity to support early childhood development

The Ministry works in partnership with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and other ministries to strengthen early childhood development services throughout British Columbia. Providing parents with the information they need about early childhood development and increasing service choice and flexibility is extremely beneficial for the healthy development of children. The Ministry is committed to investing in community-based initiatives in order to build community capacity, and to support the early childhood development needs of children and their families.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Implementing, with Ministry partners, a cross government strategy to support children under age six and their families to optimize early childhood development outcomes;
- Building capacity within Aboriginal communities to deliver culturally appropriate services; and
- Supporting Aboriginal communities to develop and implement early childhood development strategies to meet their needs.

Progress towards the objective

- Developed a recruitment and retention plan for Early Childhood Educators.
- Translated the Supported Child Development Program brochure in order to respond to the needs of B.C.'s expanding multi-cultural population. It is now available in Korean, Spanish and Chinese.
- Collaborated with the Ministries of Education and Health on the "Ready, Set, Learn" program, providing information to parents to help increase school readiness for more than 17,000 soon-to-be students.
- Built on successes in Early Childhood Development in the Ministry:
  - — invested over $7 million to support a continuum of Aboriginal Early Childhood Development services;
  - — supported the training of Aboriginal Early Childhood Educators and regional Aboriginal Early Childhood Educators networking conferences; and
  - — funded Early Childhood Education bursaries, 41 of which went to Aboriginal students.
- Sponsored WorkLife BC, an initiative to raise and sustain awareness of the importance of work-life balance, ultimately creating healthier families and communities.
- Increased access to infant development programming through the funding of five new regional Aboriginal Infant Development Program Advisors, for a total of 30 in B.C.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Per cent of children who enter Kindergarten "ready to learn".	75%	Data for the measure is available every three years		Not Available

Data Source: HELP http://www.ecdportal.help.ubc.ca/findedidata.htm

Discussion of Results

The Early Development Instrument reflects children's readiness to learn, reveals the differences in their development across neighbourhoods, and assesses how well communities are supporting young children and their families.

The measure rates students on performance in five key factors: physical health, language/cognitive skills, social competence, emotional maturity, and communication and general knowledge. These factors provide a comprehensive picture of the status of B.C. children's school readiness.

There was no 2006/07 target for this measure as data for the province is collected every three years. Data will be reported in 2007/08.

Data is collected using the Early Development Instrument, which is a teacher-rated assessment of Kindergarten students' "readiness to learn".

Research shows that many factors contribute to a child entering Kindergarten "ready to learn", from family health and income status through to community resources, child care availability and the existence of community early childhood development programs. The Ministry is committed to understanding why the Early Development Instrument results are changing in B.C. and to learning what is working in communities that have improved their scores.

British Columbia is the first province to invest in the Early Development Instrument province-wide and to map the results on a neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood basis. (http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/).

Ministry Response

The Ministry continues to implement initiatives to support readiness to learn of Kindergarten children, such as:

- supporting the Ministry of Education's StrongStart Centre program for preschoolers and their parents or caregivers;
- provided $12 million in one-time early learning grants to improve outcomes for young children;
- provided over $4 million in one-time investments to foster literacy and Aboriginal language and cultural development in communities across B.C.; and
- provided an additional $5 million to Success By 6®.

Objective 2.2: Families have access to quality child care

The Ministry is committed to supporting and providing opportunities for children to be safe and secure; to be physically, mentally and emotionally healthy, and to be effective learners. Research shows that quality child care, combined with early childhood and infant development initiatives, contributes to improved outcomes for children and is critical to success in school and in life.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Creating additional child care spaces;
- Moving to a more user-friendly and efficient child care subsidy administration that is supported by new community outreach services available to parents;
- Working with the Ministry of Education to strengthen linkages; and
- Focusing child care resources on supporting those children at greatest risk of being excluded from access to quality child care.

Progress towards the objective

- Maintained the $126 million Child Care Subsidy Program despite the loss of federal funding.
- Provided one-time funding of $40 million to help child care providers with the cost of operations: $20 million in direct funding and another $20 million to flow through a trust administered by the BC Council for Families, to allow for quality improvement investments in professional development, minor capital improvements, equipment and supplies.
- Established a provincial Child Care Subsidy Centre with extended operating hours and interpreter services to assist families whose second language is English.
- Increased access to funding for students enrolled in basic Early Childhood Education (ECE) courses. 475 students were approved for funding in 2006/07. Of these, 21 applications were approved for the Native Education Centre which runs an Aboriginal Early Childhood Education training program in conjunction with Vancouver Community College.
- Awarded 208 projects with funding for minor capital costs, supporting over 7,403 licensed child care spaces; 11 of these projects were in Aboriginal communities. This represents an increase of 63 per cent in the number of Aboriginal projects funded over 2005/06.

Performance Measures	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Total number of licensed spaces approved for Child Care Operating Funding.	71,869	75,328[1]	79,190	84,000	82,386 Substantively Achieved
Average monthly number of licensed spaces approved for Child Care Operating Funding.	65,977	68,360	72,268	77,000	76,214 Substantively Achieved

Data Source: Child Care Operating Fund Datamart System

[1] The 2004/05 actual has been restated from 76,440 reported in previous Service Plans to reflect improvements in data collection.

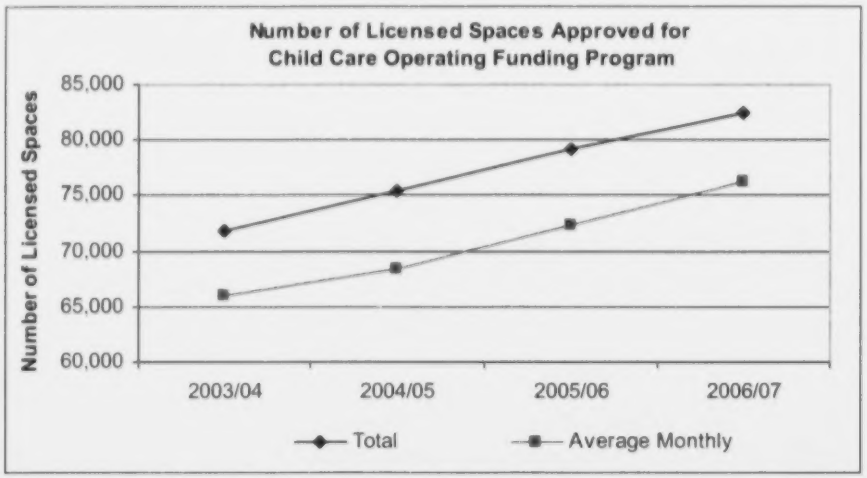
Discussion of Results

The availability of child care is a key need of many families in the province. One way to measure child care capacity and supply is to count the total number of spaces approved for funding under the Child Care Operating Fund. This measure is calculated in two ways: the maximum number of spaces for the year and the average monthly number of spaces.

In 2006/07, there were 82,386 licensed spaces approved for funding under the Child Care Operating Funding Program. The Ministry met 98 per cent of its planned target and increased the total number of spaces approved for funding by 3,196. These spaces included 145 new licensed child care spaces available in First Nations facilities. This brought the total number of Aboriginal facilities funded under the Child Care Operating Funding Program to 79, operating 2,563 licensed child care spaces.

The monthly average of licensed spaces approved for funding under the Child Care Operating Fund increased by 3,946 (99 per cent of target).

There has been an upward trend or increase in the number of licensed spaces approved for funding through the Child Care Operating Funding Program for the last three years, as indicated in the graph below.



The Child Care Operating Funding Program is not mandatory — the number of funded providers is dependent on the number applying for funding. Targets for the measures were set based on historical trends, funding levels and anticipated demand for child care spaces.

The Ministry's ability to meet the targets was significantly impacted by the cancellation of the federal 2005 Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. A temporary cap on the number of funded licensed spaces was in place from January 5, 2007 to May 20, 2007.

Ministry Response

The Ministry will allocate new capital resources in the most cost efficient and effective manner possible in partnership with the community to ensure optimum space development in a variety of community settings. The Ministry is providing incentives to non-profit, family and private child care providers, enhancing existing neighbourhood hubs and maximizing the use of public spaces such as schools.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of new licensed child care spaces funded under the Capital Funding Program.	N/A	1,443	3,000	356[1] Not Achieved

Data Source: The Management Information System.

[1] As noted below, these spaces were created through other targeted funding initiatives as the Province's Capital Funding Program is on hold pending clarification of new federal funding. 2,117 of 3,300 child care spaces funded under the Capital Funding Program since 2001 were completed as of March 31, 2007.

Discussion of Results

Increasing resources and government support helps to make child care more accessible and affordable for parents. This measure counts the number of new spaces funded each year via the Child Care Capital Funding Program.

In 2005/06, the Ministry funded the construction of 1,443 new child care spaces. Of those, construction on 384 spaces were completed as of March 31, 2007.

In 2006/07, there were no new licensed child care spaces funded under the Capital Funding Program, as the targets were set based on continuation of federal funds under the Early Learning and Child Care agreement. The Ministry did not meet its planned target.

Ministry Response

Despite the challenges resulting from the loss of federal Early Learning and Child Care funding, the Ministry pursued alternative federal sources to create child care spaces, resulting in the creation of 356 new licensed child care spaces in communities across B.C.

The Ministry established/expanded 22 neighbourhood hubs ($2.5 million) across the province to increase access to child care and early child development programs to support local community needs.

There were 181 new licensed child care spaces funded under the Ministry's Neighbourhood Hubs initiative where child care, early childhood development and family strengthening programs are housed under one roof. Another 175 new licensed child care spaces were funded through three new community partnerships.

The federal government has signalled its intention to provide approximately $33 million per year to the province for child care. However, this amount is about one-fifth of the amount that was anticipated under the 2005 Early Learning and Child Care Agreement-in-Principle and is not substantial enough to offset the loss of the Early Learning and Child Care funding.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy.	21,704	22,612	24,000	23,286 Substantively Achieved

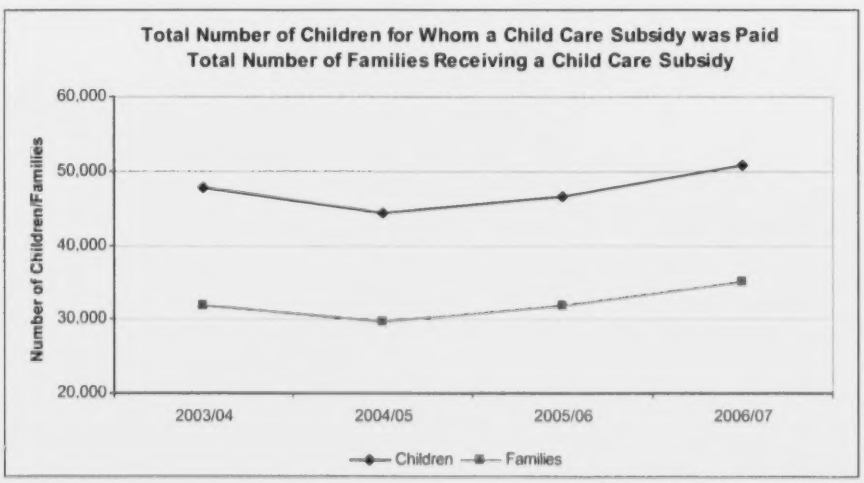
Data Source: Ministry of Children and Family Development Subsidy Datamart

Discussion of Results

This measure reflects the accessibility of quality child care, especially for families with low or moderate incomes. In 2006/07, on average, 23,286 subsidies per month were paid to families. The Ministry met 97 per cent of its planned target of 24,000 subsidies.

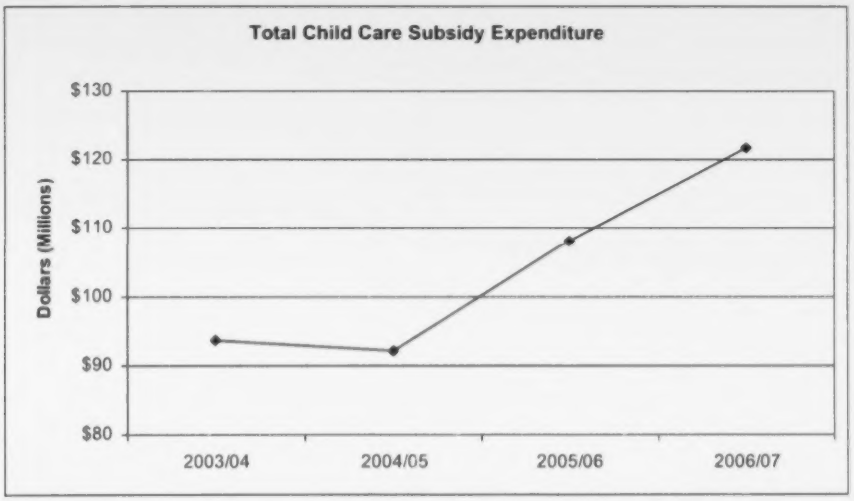
There has been an upward trend in the average number of children whose families receive subsidies over the last three years. In 2006/07, the number of children whose families received a child care subsidy was approximately three per cent higher than in 2005/06.

Performance was impacted in the last quarter of the year. The subsidy centre experienced backlogs in processing due to the implementation of a new computer system. This resulted in a 19-day response time for authorizations, up from the Ministry standard of 7-10 days.



The Child Care subsidy targets reflect the expected uptake of the subsidy program. Child Care subsidy is a demand-driven program, dependent on applications from families. All eligible families who apply receive funding.

While, on average in 2006/07, 23,286 subsidies per month were paid to families, in total, child care subsidies were paid to 35,013 families for 50,733 individual children.



Total child care subsidy expenditures have increased over the past two years from $92.4 million in 2004/05 to $126 million[4] in 2006/07, an increase of 36 per cent.

Ministry Response

The Child Care Subsidy Centre is implementing strategies to reduce the backlog, which had been reduced from 19 business days wait in February down to its March 31, 2007 level of eight business days.

Objective 2.3: Increased access to early intervention and support services to assist families caring for children and youth with special needs

This objective reflects the Ministry's commitment to increase access to, and reduced waiting times for intervention and support services for children and youth with special needs, so they can live as fully and as independently as possible within their homes and communities.

Key strategies for this objective include:

- New investments in key intervention and support programs;
- Development of new evidence-based services;
- Development and implementation of retention and recruitment strategies for paediatric therapists and interventionists; and
- Improved cross government planning and co-ordination of provincial and community-based services.

[4] Child Care Subsidy Expenditure totalled $122 million in 2006/07 according to the Ministry's Child Care Subsidy datamart. When accruals and other financial adjustments are taken into account, total Child Care Subsidy Expenditures are estimated at $126 million for 2006/07.

Progress towards the objective

- Implemented a new "key worker" and parent support approach to assist families of children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and similar conditions to help parents, family members, adoptive parents, caregivers and service providers to identify ways to adapt the child's environment in response to the child's needs.
- Supported the development, in collaboration with Douglas College, of a training course for behavioural interventionists to work with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder as part of the plan to support skilled and qualified behavioural interventionists for children with autism in B.C.
- Provided access to intervention services to approximately 4,300 children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder, a ten-fold increase since 1999/2000.
- Supported recruitment and retention strategies for paediatric therapists including: the use of therapy assistants in the delivery of services, regional professional development and supporting students in rural communities.

Performance Measure

The Ministry is unable to report on two of its measures due to unexpected data issues and has removed them from the 2007/08 – 2009/10 Service Plan:

- Per cent of children with special needs under six and their families who receive an early intervention therapy service within three months of service request.
- Per cent of children with special needs under six and their families who received a supported child development service within three months of service request.

The Ministry is starting to work with its stakeholders to develop performance measures and improve data collection.

Goal 3: Children, youth and their families are served by accountable and responsive community-based service delivery systems

The Ministry believes children, youth, and their families are best served through a community-based system that moves the planning and management of programs and services closer to the recipients and increases their ability to respond quickly and appropriately to the needs of families. This includes the development of agreements between the province and Aboriginal communities to transfer responsibilities for Aboriginal child protection and family support to these communities.

Objective 3.1: Community-based governance structures are supported

This objective reflects the Ministry's priority to establish regional Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service delivery authorities. These would ensure the provision of children and family services that are consistent with local and cultural values and help build and reinforce connections with community, extended families and cultural heritage.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Development of enabling legislation;
- Focusing on the implementation of a plan jointly developed by Aboriginal communities and the Ministry, to establish regional Aboriginal child and family development authorities, including a phased-in plan for the transfer of responsibility consistent with readiness and capacity; and
- Development of non-Aboriginal child and family development authorities.

Progress towards the objective

- Established a legislation working group, representing five Aboriginal Planning Committees, Aboriginal leadership and the Ministry. The Ministry continues to work with Aboriginal partners to develop legislation for the creation of permanent Aboriginal authorities.
- Continued to work with Aboriginal Planning Committees to develop plans for regional models of service delivery. One Aboriginal interim planning authority was established for the Vancouver Island Region in June 2007, and one other regional Aboriginal interim planning authority is preparing for interim status in 2007/08.

Performance Measure	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of new regional child and family development authorities established that assume responsibility for delivery of Ministry services.	0	Five regional Aboriginal child and family development authorities	0 Not Achieved

Discussion of Results

The creation of Aboriginal child and family governance authorities reflects a community-based service delivery system that provides culturally appropriate services. This model of service delivery enhances the capacity of Aboriginal communities to better meet the needs of their children, youth, families and communities.

The Ministry did not meet its planned target. The process of developing regional models of decision-making and service delivery that best meet the vision and goals for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children, youth and families continues.

The measure has been removed from the Ministry's 2007/08 – 2009/10 Service Plan.

Ministry Response

Aboriginal people will lead the design and implementation of child and family development services for Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities delivered by Aboriginal people.

Regional Aboriginal planning committees desiring to move forward to interim planning authorities will be supported to proceed as a Ministry priority.

The Ministry will continue to work with Aboriginal partners to establish enabling legislation for the spring of 2008.

Regionalization of non-Aboriginal services is advancing. A key first step has been including Regional Executive Directors in the Ministry's leadership team to provide significant guidance on the service delivery component of the Ministry's work. Meaningful engagement of communities in determining and improving services is a priority for 2007/08.

Objective 3.2: Accountable and quality contracted services

The Ministry seeks to improve the accountability of its contracted services in order to encourage responsible management of community-based social services. The Ministry uses performance-based contracts with agencies and community organizations to improve service quality and to ensure the most effective use of available resources. Performance-based contracting reduces the risk of contract litigation and establishes better accountability, better service delivery and value for money. The Ministry also continues to focus on the use of mechanisms such as accreditation, audits and reviews as part of its quality assurance efforts.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Implementing improvements to strengthen contracts;
- Implementing enhancements to contract information systems and tools;
- Providing accreditation training, support and advice to contractors to assist them in achieving and maintaining accreditation; and
- Expanding the network of agency mentors to assist other agencies in the accreditation process.

Progress towards the objective

- Participating in the cross-ministry Social Sector Integrated Information Project. This multi-year project will provide comprehensive, client-centred information to support front-line workers, ensure value for money spent on programs and assist in the management of program performance across the social service sector.
- 31 agencies, required by Ministry policy to be accredited, achieved accreditation (for a total of 192 as of March 31, 2007). An additional 14 agencies, including two Aboriginal agencies, voluntarily achieved accreditation.
- The Ministry's Youth Custody Services is the first custody program in North America to be accredited. This is international recognition of an organization's commitment to best practice. The Ministry's Vancouver Coastal Region is preparing for accreditation over the next three years.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Per cent of agencies, that are required to be accredited, that achieve accreditation.	39%	70%	100%	93% Substantively Achieved

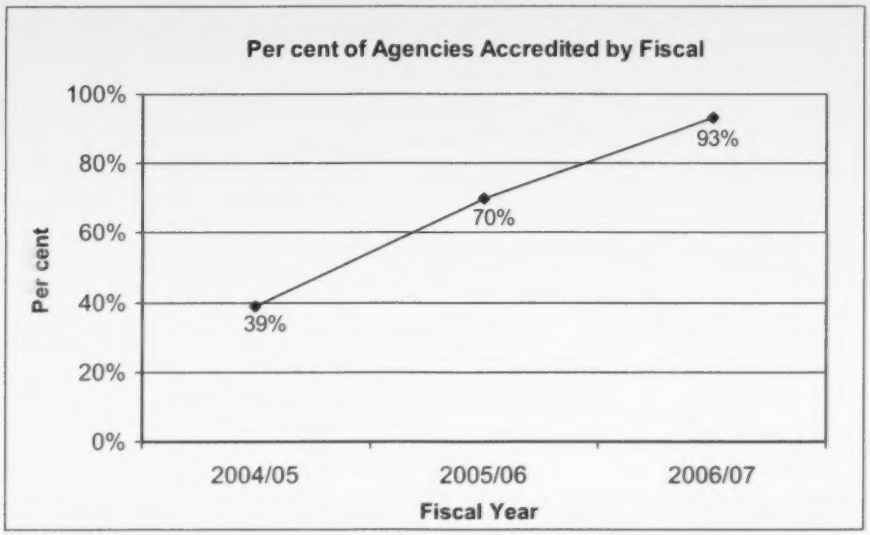
Data Source: Accreditation database and reporting from agencies.

Discussion of Results

Ministry policy (in place since 1999) requires contractors receiving $500,000 or more annual Ministry funding to be accredited by September 30, 2006. This measure is an indicator of quality assurance in the delivery of its considerable number of contracted services.

The number of agencies required to be accredited varies from year to year as changes in agency contracts move them above or below the $500,000 threshold. In 2006/07, 93 per cent of agencies required to be accredited achieved accreditation. The Ministry substantively achieved its planned target.

There has been a significant increase in the proportion of accredited agencies in the last three years, from 39 per cent of all required agencies in 2004/05 to 93 per cent in 2006/07. British Columbia leads the way in the growing international trend in the use of objective third-party accreditation as a means to ensure stringent performance standards are met and exceeded.



By March 31, 2007, 192 agencies required to be accredited achieved accreditation.

Ministry Response

The Ministry is working with the 14 agencies (seven per cent) who did not achieve accreditation in 2006/07.

Report on Resources

Resource Summary Table

Core Business Areas	Estimated[1]	Other Authorizations[2]	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance[3]
Operating Expenses ($000)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Child and Family Development	627,337	6,135	633,472	625,585	(7,887)
Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs	531,548	2,269	533,817	535,124	1,307
Provincial Services	54,272	799	55,071	54,741	(330)
Executive and Support Services	20,869	343	21,212	27,019	5,807
Total Ministry Operations	**1,234,026**	**9,546**	**1,243,572**	**1,242,469**	**(1,103)**
Community Living Services Vote					
Ministry Services — Community Living	659	7	666	645	(21)
Transfers to Community Living British Columbia	601,610	8,096	609,706	609,701	(5)
Total Community Living Services	**602,269**	**8,103**	**610,372**	**610,346**	**(26)**
Adjustment of Prior Year's Accrual			0	(1,247)	(1,247)
Total Ministry	**1,836,295**	**17,649**	**1,853,944**	**1,851,568**	**(2,376)**
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Child and Family Development	2,939		2,939	2,883	(56)
Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs	275		275	336	61
Provincial Services	621		621	591	(30)
Executive and Support Services	227		227	231	4
Total Ministry Operations	**4,062**	**0**	**4,062**	**4,041**	**(21)**
Community Living Services Vote					
Ministry Services — Community Living	5		5	4	(1)
Total Community Living Services	**5**	**0**	**5**	**4**	**(1)**
Total Ministry	**4,067**	**0**	**4,067**	**4,045**	**(22)**

Core Business Areas	Estimated[1]	Other Authorizations[2]	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance[3]
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Executive and Support Services	26,282	0	26,282	16,968	(9,314)
Total Ministry Operations	**26,282**	**0**	**26,282**	**16,968**	**(9,314)**
Consolidated Capital Plan Expenditures (CCP) ($000)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Child and Family Development	625		625	0	(625)
Provincial Services	14,642		14,642	14,899	257
Total Ministry Operations	**15,267**	**0**	**15,267**	**14,899**	**(368)**
Community Living Services Vote	5,030		5,030	405	(4,625)
Total Ministry	**20,297**	**0**	**20,297**	**15,304**	**(4,993)**
Other Financing Transactions ($000)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Executive and Support Services — Human Services Providers Financing Program					
Receipts	36		36	127	91
Disbursements	0	0	0	0	0
Net Cash Source (Requirements)	**36**	**0**	**36**	**127**	**91**

[1] The "Estimated" amount corresponds to the *Estimates* as presented to the Legislative Assembly February 21, 2006.

[2] Other "Authorizations" include *Estimates*, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies.

[3] Variance is the "Actual" minus the "Total Estimated". Where spending is less than budgeted, the Variance is displayed with a bracket.

Core Business Areas

The Ministry relies on its four core business areas to implement its strategic direction and achieve its goals and objectives.

Child and Family Development provides a range of services for children, youth and their families to maintain and improve the safety and well-being of vulnerable children and youth in B.C. It includes: child protection; residential; guardianship; foster care; permanency and adoption planning for children permanently in care; and services to strengthen and preserve families. It also includes community child and youth mental health services, community youth justice supervision services, and services to assist youth who are at-risk or who are sexually exploited.

Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs is responsible for early childhood development, child care programs, and services for children and youth with special needs and their families. The goal of these services is to support children and youth to achieve their full potential. Early childhood development includes services and

initiatives to meet the diverse needs of children from birth up to six years of age. Child care services are designed to allow families to choose from a range of available, affordable, safe, quality early learning and child care options that meet their diverse needs and support healthy child development. This core business area also includes developmental and support services for children and youth with special needs, such as services and funding for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and early intervention services.

Provincial Services provide for the administration of specialized provincial services for children and youth, such as youth custody centres, treatment programs for psychiatrically ill or conduct-disordered adolescents, services for the deaf and hard of hearing, and migrant services. This area is also responsible for the planning and monitoring of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan.

Executive and Support Services provide overall advice, direction, leadership and support to Ministry programs. This includes overarching policy and legislative support, intergovernmental relations, audit, staff development, performance management and related research functions, administrative and financial support and guidance.

Community Living Services

In addition to overall responsibility for the ministry, the Minister is responsible for supporting Community Living British Columbia to achieve its mandate to provide and improve upon services to adults and children with developmental disabilities.

Ministry Services — Community Living: Funding for the Office of the Advocate for Service Quality and general support and advice to the Minister regarding Community Living British Columbia related responsibilities.

Transfers to Community Living British Columbia: Funding transfers to Community Living British Columbia for the governance, management, operations and delivery of services and supports to adults and children with developmental disabilities.

Explanation of Resource Summary

The annual Ministry budget is based on assumptions contained in the Ministry's 2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan – Budget 2006, forecasts of expenditures, caseload trends, anticipated impacts of legislation, policy and program changes. The variance between the total estimated and the actual expenditures for each Core Business reflect fluctuations primarily in caseload and program demand. Overall, the Ministry met its budget target for 2006/07.

Child and Family Development

The under expenditure of $7.89 million (or 1.2 per cent of the budget) was mainly due to lower than anticipated Child and Youth Mental Health Plan spending as a result of delays in recruitment.

Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs

The over expenditure of $1.31 million (or 0.2 per cent of the budget) was due to one time spending for children and youth with special needs.

Executive and Support Services

The over expenditure of $5.81 million (or 27.4 per cent of the budget) was mainly due to program costs that were paid from Executive and Support Services for administrative reasons.

Capital Expenditures

The under expenditure of $9.31 million (or 35.4 per cent of the budget) was mainly due to delays in development of information systems for the case and contract management system.

Consolidated Capital Plan

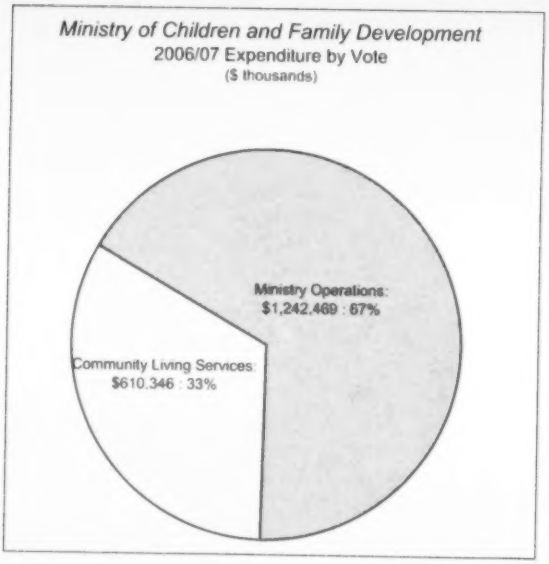
The under expenditure of $4.63 million (or 91.9 per cent of the budget) in Community Living Services was due to unbudgeted proceeds of sales from existing Group Homes and delays in Group Home construction.

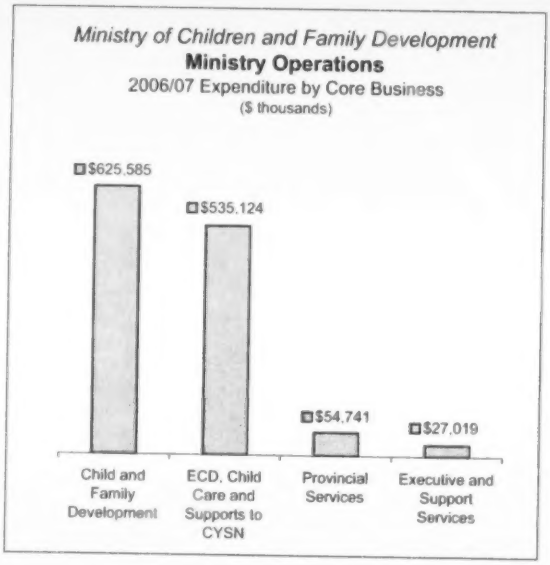
Significant year over year resource changes:

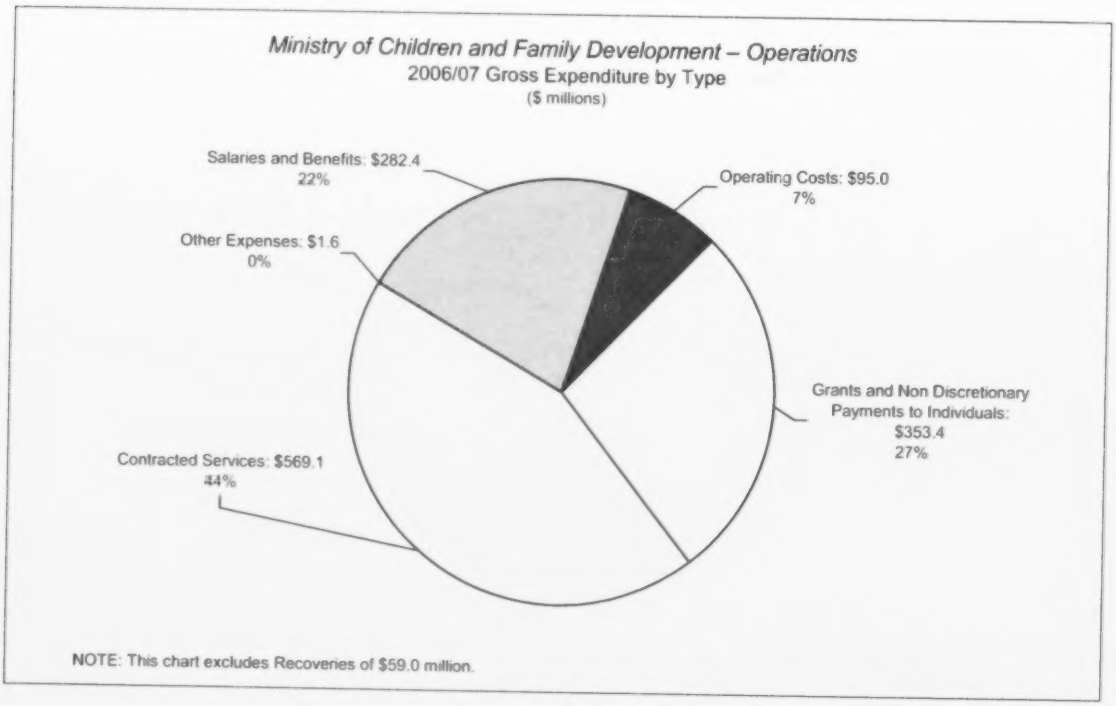
- A review of grant and contract expenditures resulted in improved accuracy of expenditure designation. From this, there was a nine per cent reduction in contracted services expenditures and a corresponding nine per cent increase in grants and non-discretionary payments.
- Budget 2006 was a Children's budget. New funding was received for children at risk, additional children services, children and youth with special needs and Aboriginal governance of child and family services:
  - — $22 million was allocated to enhance existing programs and supports to care for, and protect vulnerable children and youth, including child protection services and children in care.
  - — $20 million provided additional services to children and supported Government's response to the recommendations of the various external reviews of the child protection system. $14 million of this was transferred to the regions to cover caseload cost pressures.
  - — $7 million was made in on-going investments in services to increase services to children with special needs and their families, including $1.5 million invested in supported child development and $0.5 million allocated to autism services.
  - — $5 million funding was allocated to continue to build on the work of transition to governance authorities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal child and family development services.

- The federal government announced in its 2006 Federal Budget the elimination of funding under the 2005 Early Learning and Child Care Agreement-in-Principle after 2006/07. Strategic one time investments in early learning and child care of $86.395 million were made of which $40 million went to quality improvements. This includes $20 million paid directly to licensed child care facilities via the Child Care Operating Funding Program and $20 million for child care facilities to be managed and administered by the BC Council for Families.
- The budget of $51.47 million for community living services for developmentally disabled children was transferred to Community Living British Columbia for 2006/07. Community Living British Columbia, in partnership with the Ministry, provides services to children with developmental disabilities and their families, children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and children who have been assessed and are eligible for the *At Home* Program.

Ministry Expense by Business Area


Ministry of Children and Family Development
2006/07 Expenditure by Vote
($ thousands)
Ministry Operations: $1,242,469 : 67%
Community Living Services: $610,346 : 33%




Ministry of Children and Family Development – Operations
2006/07 Gross Expenditure by Type
($ millions)
Salaries and Benefits: $282.4 22%
Operating Costs: $95.0 7%
Other Expenses: $1.6 0%
Grants and Non Discretionary Payments to Individuals: $353.4 27%
Contracted Services: $569.1 44%
NOTE: This chart excludes Recoveries of $59.0 million.

Ministry Contact Information

General Ministry enquiries:

Client Relations: **250 387-7027** (in Victoria), or toll-free: **1 877 387-7027**
or E-mail: MCF.CorrespondenceManagement@gov.bc.ca

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9770 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9S5

For online information about the Ministry visit:

— http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca
— http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/index.htm
— http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/index.htm

Ministry's Regional Offices

Fraser	**Telephone: 604 586-4100** Facsimile: 604 586-4151 Mailing/Physical Address: 101-10221 153rd Street Surrey BC V3R 0L7
Interior	**Telephone: 250 371-3650** Facsimile: 250 371-3611 Mailing/Physical Address: Suite 210 1165 Battle Street Kamloops V2C 2N4 OR **Telephone: 250 470-0888** Facsimile: 250 470-0890 Mailing/Physical Address: 400 – 1726 Dolphin Avenue Kelowna V1Y 9R9
North	**Telephone: 250 565-4367** Facsimile: 250 565-4427 Mailing/Physical Address: 462 - 1011 Fourth Avenue Prince George V2L 3H9
Vancouver Coastal	**Telephone: 604 660-2433** Facsimile: 604 660-4005 Mailing/Physical Address: 900 - 865 Hornby Street Vancouver BC V6Z 2G3

Vancouver Island

Telephone: 250 952-4707
Facsimile: 250 952-4282
Mailing Address: PO Box 9727
Stn Prov Gov V8W 9S2
Physical Address: 140 - 4460 Chatterton Way
Victoria, BC

Key Contact Information

Adoption

Hundreds of children in the permanent care of the Ministry are waiting to be adopted into permanent, loving families. Applicants do not need to be married, wealthy or a certain age to adopt a waiting child.

For information on adopting a child, phone toll-free in B.C.:
1 877 ADOPT 07 (1 877 236-7807) or phone a nearby Ministry office.

Please phone today for information or visit: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/adoption/index.htm

Advocate for Service Quality

The Advocate works for Adults with Developmental Disabilities. There is no cost to clients for the Advocate's services.

For information:

Vancouver area call: **604 775-1238**, Fax: 604 660-1505

Victoria residents call Enquiry BC at **250 387-6121** and ask to be transferred to the Advocate for Service Quality.

Elsewhere in B.C. call Enquiry BC at **1 800 663-7867** and ask to be transferred to the Advocate for Service Quality.

Mailing Address: Suite 820 - 999 West Broadway
Vancouver BC V5Z 1K5

For online information visit: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/getting_help/advocate_service_quality.htm

Child and Youth Mental Health

For information on child and youth mental health visit our site:
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/index.htm

Children and Youth with Special Needs

Information on intervention and family support services for children and youth with special needs and their families: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/index.htm

For online information specific to Autism Spectrum Disorder:
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm

For online information specific to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder including prevention, assessment and diagnosis and family support: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/fasd/index.htm

Child Care B.C. Helpline — for information on child care

For information on child care and referrals for B.C. child care programs and services for parents and child care providers phone: **1 888 338-6622**.

For online information visit: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/.

Foster Parents

B.C.'s foster parents make a positive difference for vulnerable children in need.

For information, phone the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations' Fosterline at **1 800 663-9999** (outside B.C. phone: **1 604 660-7696**) or the Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents toll-free at: **1 866 291-7091**.

For online information visit: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/index.htm.

Helpline for Children in British Columbia

The Helpline for Children provides round-the-clock access to a child welfare worker to respond to concerns that a child under the age of 19 years has been or is likely to be abused or neglected. Abuse can be physical, sexual or emotional, or the result of neglect. Calls can be anonymous — and abuse can be stopped.

Phone: **310-1234**, free from anywhere in the province anytime.

Use telephone device for the deaf, dial: **1 866 660-0505**.

For online information visit: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/reportabuse.htm

Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) Site

Information on early childhood development research.

For information on the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) an interdisciplinary research partnership related to early child development visit: http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/.

For more information on this and other Ministry Annual Service Plan Reports please visit: http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca

Ombudsman

The Ombudsman receives inquiries and complaints about the practices and services provided by public bodies, and may investigate to determine if the public body is being fair to the people it services.

For information:

All of B.C. telephone number: **1 800 567-3247**
Victoria telephone number: **250 387-5855**

Address:
In Person: Second Floor, 756 Fort Street, Victoria, BC

Mailing Address: PO Box 9039 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9A5

For online information visit: http://www.ombud.gov.bc.ca/

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

The Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia operates under provincial law to protect the legal rights and financial interests of children, to provide assistance to adults who need support for financial and personal decision making, and to administer the estates of deceased and missing persons where there is no one else able to do so.

If calling from Vancouver — please call **604 660-2421** and ask to be transferred to the Public Guardian and Trustee.

If calling from Victoria — please call **250 356-8160** and ask to be transferred to the Public Guardian and Trustee.

All other areas of BC — please call **1 800 663-7867** and ask to be transferred to the Public Guardian and Trustee.

Address: 700 - 808 West Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V6C 3L3

Facsimile: 604 660-0374

For online information visit: http://www.trustee.bc.ca/

Representative for Children and Youth

The Representative for Children and Youth supports children, youth and families who need help with the child welfare system, and advocates for changes to the system itself.

Telephone: **250 356-6710**
Facsimile: 250 356-0837
Toll-Free: **1 800 476-3933**

Address: Fourth Floor
1019 Wharf Street
PO Box 9207 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9J1

E-mail: rcy@rcybc.ca

For online information visit: http://www.rcybc.ca/content/home.asp

Annual Service Plan Report Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Child and youth mental health: refers to children and youth with mental disorders that interfere significantly with daily functioning, such as: anxiety disorder, conduct disorder, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, any depressive disorder, substance abuse, pervasive development disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, Tourette's disorder, any eating disorder and bipolar disorder.

Child care: refers to the care and supervision of a child in a child care setting, other than: a) by the child's parent; or, b) while the child is attending an educational program provided under the *School Act* or the *Independent School Act*.

Children in care: refers to any child under 19 years of age in the care of the Director under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

Children and youth with special needs: children with special needs have significant impairments in one or more of the following areas: health, cognition, behaviour, communication, sensory motor, social/emotional/behavioural or self-help (adaptive), and require specialized supports to enhance or improve their health, development or participation in daily activities at home, school and in their communities.

Delegated Aboriginal agencies: refers to Aboriginal agencies with delegated child welfare authority under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

High-risk youth: refers to youth aged 16 to 18 who experience significant and often multiple challenges in their transition to adulthood such as: sexual exploitation, alcohol and drug misuse, living on the street, and mental health problems.

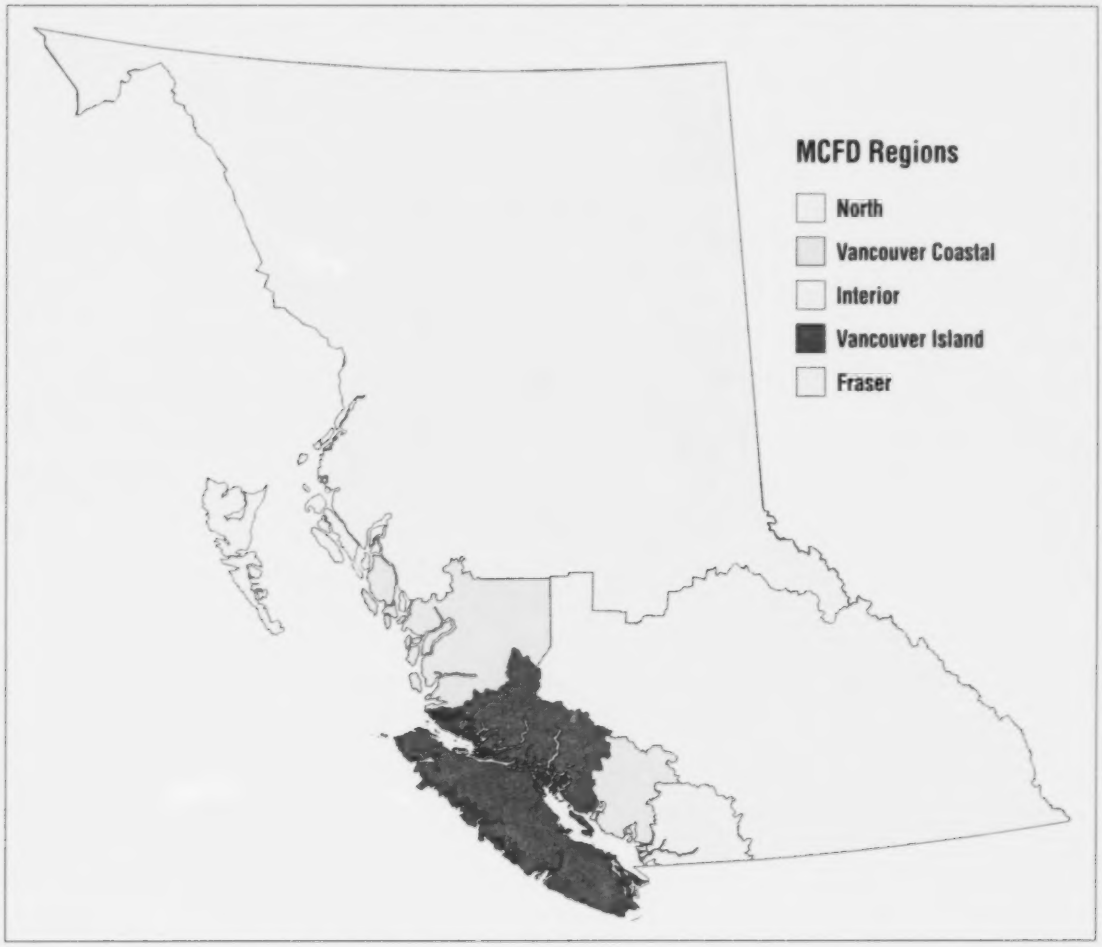
Out of care options: alternative care arrangements with extended family or close friends for children at risk of neglect or abuse who are temporarily unable to live with their parents.

Sexually exploited youth: refers to a person under the age of 19 who has been manipulated or forced to engage in sexual activity in exchange for money, drugs, food, shelter or other considerations.

Strength-based approach: approach for service planning and delivery that focuses on the substantial strengths of communities, families, youth and children — regardless of the difficulties they face — and acknowledges the ability of each to contribute to solutions to address their identified needs.

Supported child development: a range of consulting and support services that support children with special needs to participate in inclusive community child care settings, including preschool.

Appendix B: Ministry Service Delivery



Refer to Ministry Contact section for Regional Office contact information.